



## United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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04/09/03

Name  
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Re: Bureau of Land Management, Anchorage Field Office - Ring of Fire Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

### **Agency Scoping Meeting Announcement and Comment/Information Request**

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is initiating preparation of a Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) for the Ring of Fire planning area. The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in the scoping process, and to provide some background information on both the Ring of Fire planning area and the process of preparing a RMP/EIS.

This process formally began on March 19, 2003 with publication of the Notice of Intent, and should be completed in September 2005. Public scoping and agency meetings will be held in seven regional locations throughout the planning area, including Anchorage, Wasilla, Soldotna, Kodiak, Haines, Skagway, and Juneau. An agency scoping meeting is scheduled in Anchorage, Alaska for Wednesday, May 14, 2003. The meeting will take place from 9:00 am to 11:30 am, at the BLM Anchorage Field Office (AFO) located on Campbell Tract, 6881 Abbott Loop Road, Anchorage, Alaska. The meeting format will include an open house from 9:00 am to 9:45am; a brief project presentation will be conducted from 9:45 am until 10:00 am. An open discussion and identification of planning issues and data needs is scheduled from 10:00 am to 11:30 am.

If you are not able to attend the agency scoping meeting or one of the open house / scoping meetings being held, a range of opportunities for broader participation will be provided throughout the process of preparing the RMP/EIS, including public meetings, newsletters (which you will receive), a project web site ([www.alaskaringoffire.com](http://www.alaskaringoffire.com)), and hearings at key project milestones.

**Project Description and Planning Area** – The BLM is a federal agency within the United States Department of Interior that is responsible for managing the surface and subsurface resources and uses of certain public lands. The BLM’s mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In managing public lands, BLM must follow a number of principles:

- recognize diverse social, economic, and cultural conditions
- balance uses and best serve the needs of the public
- accommodate multiple use and sustained yield

The AFO administers 16 million acres of land in the southern half of Alaska, including the 1.3 million acres within the Ring of Fire planning area. This planning area includes all of the public land and Federal mineral estate managed by the AFO from below the Dixon Entrance in southeast Alaska to Attu Island at the western end of the Aleutian Islands, a linear distance of approximately 2,500 miles. The boundaries are generally described as the Canadian border on the southeast part of the planning area; the western portions of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Municipality of Anchorage, and Kenai Peninsula Borough in south-central Alaska; and the Kodiak Island Borough, portions of the Alaska Peninsula, and the Aleutian Island Chain in the western part of the planning area.

**Purpose of the RMP/EIS** – BLM uses the land use planning process to manage resources and designate uses on federal lands that it manages. Preparation of a RMP is required before taking specific resource management actions or pursuing additional planning. Under BLM guidelines, the planning process is integrated with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

The RMP is a land use decision-making document that provides overall guidance for management decisions in a designated area. It includes a comprehensive and balanced assessment of resource values and uses in the planning area, while remaining adaptive and flexible in its approach to resource management.

The plan is created through an open, public process, utilizing the input from those who have an interest in these public lands, and the surrounding communities. A RMP provides future direction for managing BLM’s interests in the planning area. BLM must follow the RMP when implementing management actions and decisions, and BLM is responsible for monitoring the consistency of these actions with the RMP. The EIS will identify the potential impacts that implementation of the RMP could have on the environment and identify appropriate measures to mitigate those impacts. There will be specific opportunities to participate in scoping for the RMP/EIS and reviewing the draft RMP/EIS.

Part of the information BLM uses in developing the RMP is derived from the land management plans of adjacent public and private landowners. BLM will consider these

resource related documents and information when developing the descriptions of resource uses, and agency and community needs.

To ensure that all factors are considered in the development of the planning and environmental documents, BLM would like your written comments, recommendations, and requested information to our office no later than June 30, 2003.

We look forward to discussing this important planning project with you at the May 14, 2003 meeting. If you have any questions regarding this project or the meeting arrangements, please feel free to contact me at the above address, or by telephone at (907) 267-1214.

Sincerely,

Robert Lloyd  
Project Manager, Ring of Fire RMP/EIS

## Ring of Fire Land Use Plan Area

